

Lunken Airport Oversight Advisory Board

June 11, 2001

Board Members present:

Rob Rubin, Chairperson	North Community Representative
Steve Shaw, Vice-Chairperson	East Community Representative
Krissi Barr	At-Large Representative
Scot Conover	West Community Representative
Tom Edwards	Fixed Base User Representative
Mike Lacinak	South Community Representative
Joe Llamas	Private User Representative
Eric Partee	Recreational/Environmental Representative

Board Members absent:

Mike Conaton (excused)	Corporate User Representative
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City Staff present:

Dennis Murphey	Director of Environmental Management
Kevin Shepard	General Services Director
Dan Dickten	Airport Manager
Steve Fagel	Assistant City Solicitor
Bob Wessel	Noise Compatibility Planner
Elaine Luchi	Administrative Technician

Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Mr. Rubin called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and announced Mr. Conaton was unable to attend.

Review and Approval of May 14, 2001 Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was presented by Mr. Shaw. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

Report by City Administration - Pending LAOAB Resolutions

Mr. Shepard indicated that the transmittal memo to City Council accompanying the resolutions was expected to be signed by the City Manager the next day. There was a possibility it would be placed on the Council calendar for their June 13 session. It would then be referred to the Community Development and Intergovernmental Committee, who would meet the following Monday. Mr. Rubin will contact the Chairperson of the Committee after formal referral. As was agreed in the last meeting, Mr. Rubin and Mr. Shaw will represent the Board at the meeting.

Report of City Administration - Runway Strength Study

Mr. Dickten reported that a full pavement study had been conducted of the main runway along with a sample of some taxiways and ramps. He expects to receive the draft report early next

week. He has also requested the results of previous weight-bearing tests from the City's Engineering Department.

Members of the Board expressed their concerns relative to the implications the findings may have on the Airport. Mr. Shepard emphasized that the intent of the study is to determine life-expectancy rather than weight-bearing capacity. Further, the City will not request that revised weight restrictions (if any) be published. Mr. Dickten explained that Lunken will still be limited to Class III aircraft due to other factors. He also stated the report must be sent to the FAA for review regardless of the results.

There were several questions asked that could not be answered without the final report and without consultation with the FAA. A summary of those questions follows:

If it is shown that allowing larger planes to land will not compromise the life-expectancy:

- are the taxiways and ramps sufficient to support heavier aircraft?
- can the FAA mandate that Lunken publish the higher weight-bearing capacity in the Airport Directory?
- could it be considered discriminatory for the Airport to refuse to allow access for heavier aircraft?

Report of City Administration - Part 150 Study

Mr. Fagel reported that the Part 150 Study Request for Proposals is under review by the Law Department. At this time, the responses have not been opened. He estimated that a contract will be approved by the end of the summer. When asked if the Board will be permitted to see the responses, Mr. Shepard replied that the City Manager has recommended LAOAB review before approval of the contract. Mr. Lacinak stressed that the Board should verify that the selected proposal meets the parameters the LAOAB provided, with emphasis on community input.

Question and Answer Period

To a question about the status of the list server, Mr. Dickten responded that this is something the Airport is continuing to pursue. He was also asked about the outcome of the Public Hearing for Celtic Helicopters; Mr. Dickten had recommended approval of their Permit to Operate.

Citizens in attendance were given the opportunity for questions and comments. Several expressed their concerns about noise and increased air traffic.

Mr. Shaw moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Note: The next meeting is scheduled for July 9 at 5:30 p.m. and will be held at H.C. Nutting Co., 611 Lunken Park Drive.

The following is a partial transcription of a discussion during the June 11, 2001 meeting of the Lunken Airport Oversight Advisory Board on a pavement analysis being done at Lunken Airport. Because some of the tape is hard to hear, the text below concentrates on statements made by Dan Dickten and Kevin Shepard at the request of the Board. Breaks in the discussion are indicated by a dotted line.

Rob Rubin: In the last meeting we had discussed briefly that, how the City is progressing with the study that they were having performed by H.C. Nutting regarding the runway strength of one of the runways. Dan, I think, has a brief status report and then we can maybe open it up for questions.

Dan Dickten: Thanks Rob. I do have a very brief update here from H.C. Nutting. Andy Bodesci is the engineer there performing the weight-bearing, weight capacity study. It's a full pavement study of the entire Airport, the main Part 139 runway 3R/21L and the taxiways and ramps on the airfield as well. His message to me was that he has the last of the lab reports back and he should have a life-expectancy table, tabulation done by Wednesday or Thursday and that a draft report should be finished by early next week. He's sending me some tables as soon as they are ready. That's really all I have from him right now. I know they had to come out and take a couple more core samples a couple of weeks ago. They had some missing data or some not reliable data or something so they had to come out and take more core samples. That's probably held them up (inaudible) so hopefully we'll have something here within the next week, ten days, certainly something by the next meeting.

RR: We talked in prior meetings and I know we discussed it in the last meeting that when the Master Plan was issued, when the runway was last strengthened, there, I think my recollection is correct that there was some weight-bearing testing which was done at that time. I recall Bob Vickrey maybe talking about that several times. At our last meeting I requested City Administration check and see if you could provide us with that material. If you could try to provide that material to us.

DD: I have requested that information from Bob Vickrey. He's trying to research that and put that together for us.

RR: We also indicated in the meeting that, I'm not sure I got this correctly but the way I took it was, that on receiving the Nutting Report that you have at some stage the ability or the responsibility to publish it, if the weight-bearing capacity of that runway changes. I want to discuss that among the board and kind of consider what implications that might have and what actions we may want to take or consider before that step's taken. I guess what I'm getting at here is if it shows a different weight-bearing capacity than what is currently published or certified, and if it differs in some way from the studies and the reports that were made in the 1990s or the last time the runway was strengthened, I think this body would want to review those, understand the implications of that before some action is taken to change that certification in a public way, in a published way. I wanted to get other people's thoughts about that and see if we want to take a position on it.

Kevin Shepard: I have a point of clarification. Currently the objective of this study as City Administration understands it is to determine the life-expectancy. That's key because in our planning we're in need of upgrading to assure the useful life of the pavement. We've got a responsibility for safety and we need to make sure we plan accordingly (inaudible). Beyond that, we don't have any other objectives regarding changing weight-bearing capacity or anything else, so whether someone at some point indicated we were going to publish something or not isn't a policy issue. It would be a formal policy issue to upgrade the runway (inaudible). The study isn't done yet obviously and when it is it going to be fully shared. I just wanted to clarify that that was all the objective we had for that study. There is no other objective going on about having the pavement handle heavier aircraft, more aircraft, or any other (inaudible) primarily concerned with life-expectancy, maintainability, assuring program safety. I saw this stuff on your agenda and I was a little bit surprised to see it again knowing that the study wasn't done and that there isn't any other objective that I know of and I just thought, I put that out there to see if that helped you.

RR: I wasn't trying to suggest one way or the other that there was an objective or some sort of agenda associated with that. What I want to focus on is, irrespective of what the objective may be, what are the implications. That to me is, you may for example, and I don't know the answer to this, but if the objective is let's determine the useful life of this runway based upon what its usage has been, what its usage is expected to be, the number and weight of aircraft that have been using it, and as a result of that study it's determined that it has a, for example, higher weight-bearing capacity than was previously published, what implications does that have as far as a whole number of issues that we've discussed over the last six or nine months. It may have no implications but I think that we want to determine, irrespective of what the objective of the report is, what effect, what effect it may have on any change in certification or any implications as to permitting or mandating for example larger aircraft, larger jet aircraft, heavier jet aircraft on the airport. So again, I'm not saying we think there's a problem. I'm saying before anything gets done beyond receiving the report and determining what it says, what implications are there if the subsequent action that publishing of this study is a change in certification. Dan had spoken for example last time of publishing in some public way results to show if there is a change in weight-bearing capacity of the runway. Again, this may have implications unintended but it may have implications that we need maybe to look at and determine whether it affects the airport. I'd like a discussion on this issue because I think it's an important issue.

RR: Just an impression, an observation, I think that we're trying to take the long view with this Board and trying to look at what's involved and the fact (inaudible) taxiways and ramps that may be strong enough to accommodate (inaudible) use for large jets doesn't necessarily mean that it's not a high priority funding item for the FAA in the future. So, I mean, we can't debate that today, you don't know the answer to that today. But I think that it still doesn't answer the question of what are the intended or maybe even unintended consequences of changing, in this case changing the weight-bearing capacity, presuming increasing the weight-bearing capacity certification. What are those implications? I think that's something we need to look at today, or how this airport could be configured five years from now or ten years from now. That's really I

think our job in looking, trying to project into the future and determine how infrastructure changes and recertification can affect this airport and the environs (inaudible).

Steve Shaw: Dan, what, you mentioned FAA review. What is the nature and extent of that (inaudible) of FAA review?

DD: The nature that the proper methodologies were used of course by a reputable firm with qualified personnel conducting the study.

SS: What is their interest in the survey?

DD: Excuse me?

SS: What is their interest? I mean are they interested in, are you saying if you use it to support a new certification they'll review it or regardless no matter what happens ?

DD: They're going to review it regardless as they reviewed the Master Plan and the weight-bearing analysis at that time and the number that they determined in the Master Plan was published in the Airport Facilities Directory.

SS: Does it also have to do with this making sure we're keeping up the runway appropriately and (inaudible) not overusing it and causing the useful life (inaudible)?

KS: If you would like to know more completely we'll address the question to the (inaudible).

SS: No, I just needed generally to know what (inaudible).

(Inaudible)

Mike Lacinak: The question I have, so this would be if the study let's say comes out and says that the runway is stronger than we all thought and can accommodate heavier weight loads, my question is so what happens then?

KS: That wasn't the objective of the study.

ML: I know.

KS: That's a by-product of the study.

RR: May I pose a question then? Might the anti-discrimination rules have an effect here whether it's intended or not that you have a weight-bearing capacity of 130,000 or 140,000 pounds (inaudible), I'll ask Steve, what implications if any do you think the anti-discrimination rules (inaudible).

Steve Fagel: Well, if the plane can't use the ramp, discrimination (inaudible) can't come in here and land (inaudible). Anti-discrimination is the, that relates to how we handle people on the

airport. I think that the rules allow a plane to land anywhere (inaudible) but there is a physical problem if they can't get on the ramp and turn (inaudible).

KS: I just think this is a pretty fundamental question, and what we ought to do is take your issues down and go back to the proper (inaudible). We don't have a study. It was intended for another purpose. No one ever intended this study to look at the issue of upgrading the airport runway's capacity. I personally don't intend to recommend to the Manager or the City Council that that runway be rated any more strong than it is now, OK. If there is somebody in the FAA hierarchy or the Law Department somewhere that wants to consider doing that, they're going to have to get by me and they're going to have to convince me with a lot more information than we have now. Because we came out of a whole master plan process several years ago and the runway and none of the infrastructure attached to it were planned for greater than the capacity that's out there. So for someone you know to say you know, "Well maybe it's going to be rated higher because this study's going to find it able to carry more weight" is really kind of an academic observation, but it's not a plan issue because nothing else is on the table to have any of the other supporting infrastructure around that runway carry more or wider aircraft. Granted that we can't tell someone if they're going to crash and burn, or if they have an emergency, or if they're the President of the United States that they're not allowed to use the airport if it can bear that aircraft. That's illegal. That's a different issue than how the airport runway is regularly used and rated for use, OK. So I just think that it's premature, and the reason I'm being overly cautious is, we end up having to deal with all these communications around this question as if someone has a plan that doesn't exist. There is no plan, there is no way a plan can be made just because a runway can bear more weight to have the airport start handling larger or heavier aircraft. That is not true. That isn't going to happen just because the runway is stronger than it was supposedly rated.

RR: That's good information and I think that what we are searching for here is information. We had a discussion probably going back six months ago about this very issue and I don't want to belabor the point but we need to see information on this. We need to better understand what the implications are and I think there are probably people in the audience just like myself who feel that you know we can hear somebody say "Look this can be certified for large jets but they can't come in here because they can't turn around." Well, you can change that, you can change that by getting FAA money and FAA considers, I know, considers very high priority adding runways, strengthening runways, and making runways more useful. Now I also know that big jets do come in here. So to say that they can't come in here is a matter of I think interpretation as to what the word "can't" means. Can 5,000 come in a day? No, but they do come in and they can come in.

DD: There are certain aircraft that we cannot get into this field.

RR: OK, well we're not going to bring the Concorde in.

DD: Nor are we going to bring in 757s, or 747s, sorry.

KS: They only come in here, I don't get it, they only come in here on a waiver, which that means an exception was made on the signature of the Airport Manager after deliberation with Engineering and only on those limited occasions where it's, in other words it's not a normal (inaudible).

RR: Kevin, if it's certified to 150,000 pounds you don't need a waiver for an MD88 or a 737.

KS: Mr. Chairman, with all respect, I've tried to explain, it can't happen because the rest of the airport is not going to be changed to enable it to happen. We have hardly been funded for anything at this airport as we have tried to explain except maintenance and safety for the last ten years. It took a major Congressional intervention and effort to get us a new taxiway for t-hangars. That effort took ten years. There is no other FAA-funded new pavement or upgraded pavement on this airport in ten years Mr. Chairman. I don't understand all the concern about what might or if, if the airport runways would be stronger, none of the rest of the pavements have been approved at anything more.

RR: You just said the magic word "approved." And I'll go back to what I said originally. This Board is supposed to take the long-view, OK. We need to know what the implications are of any change, because it may have effect on what this airport can and cannot do under FAA rules. All we're seeking to do is to get information from you as to what reports you have right now on runway strengthening, runway strength which were done ten years ago, gather the information that you're going to get from H.C. Nutting. We don't know the parameters, we don't know what the charge was from Dan to H.C. Nutting, what their study entails. We don't have any of that information and I trust, and I don't have any doubt, and I'm not concerned that we will get that information. But what I'm saying is we need to know what the implications of that information, not only what is here today but what may be here five years from now, what may be here ten years from now. Because I do know that FAA has rules and I know that there are implications whether intended or not as to changes in certification, changes in for example infrastructure strength. OK? That's all we're seeking to get, and I'm not saying that there's some hidden agenda. I'm not saying there's any objective other than safety, which is what you've indicated. But our job is to try to gather this information and determine if there are any implications good or bad from the change. And that's what we're trying to do.

Joe Llamas: I have a question. It's either for Kevin or Dan, I don't care which one. In the event that it is determined that the runway would be stronger than the currently posted limit, does the Airport Information Directory automatically get upgraded to that or does that happen after the City takes some formal action to change that information?

KS: My position is that it's up to the City.

JL: OK, as compared to having the FAA arbitrarily change it?

KS: Yes, because of what I stated here. You can't just upgrade a runway to some unbelievable level and have the rest of the airport somehow manage to support that change.

JL: That being the case it would appear to me that our major concern would have to be if the City, when the City decides to indicate that they're going to upgrade the weight-bearing capacity of that runway by formally passing something which would be published. It's at that point that, that would be like developing a new piece of parcel out there, that's the thing that we should be looking at at that time. For them to try to present to this group other than the data what all the possible implications could be, I don't know how anybody could be able to answer that because they could give you 50 scenarios and the 51st one is what takes place. And then you could say we weren't told about the 51st one.

RR: What I think, what I heard was that the City, at the time that Nutting comes out with the report, there is time if the City Administration has determined that we should go based on this report to get an increased certification from the FAA, the City drives the train on that and there is some period of time within which we (inaudible).

JL: That's right. So it seems like we're beating a dead horse here to try to ask for a lot of things until it appears that something is going to go into that direction. And at that point (inaudible).

RR: Well I think we want to gather information and try to reach either revised questions that can be intelligently framed and answered and without that information we can't do that. And I think as a Board we want to review as much as we can, ask these questions, and try to get as good answers as we can, that you can provide and if you don't know the answers then go to other sources to try to come up with the answers. But I think the process is a process that we are obligated to go through.

JL: I agree, but I'm just simply saying until they get to the point where they're going to indicate that this is something that you want to do, just like they come out and they say "We want to put an RFP out for a given parcel for development" you're going to look at what that development is. Until they get to that stage, which they may never get to, it would seem that we're trying to address something that isn't (inaudible).

KS: But even well beyond that Mr. Chairman, even though I think I, I'd certainly be willing to take up the question, if at such time we have enough information to demonstrate a higher weight-bearing rating is possible, would the City change it, and under what conditions would the City change it and under what conditions would the FAA try to mandate it, I feel pretty strongly in my position that I don't think the City would want any upgraded rating on that runway without a lot of other assurances about infrastructure to be provided. It is not now in any federal funding plan.

RR: Well good. That's what I'm saying.

KS: Whatever assurances we can do to get FAA, legal, or other support to stand behind it, I think you ought to, because I think that's, I think I speak the position that the City would stand behind. I really do.

RR: That's good information.

RR: Kevin thank you for your presentation and (inaudible).

Scot Conover: So I gather from everything that the objective is not to recalculate the weight capacity. Is that correct?

KS: Right.

SC: Is what's posted in that Facilities Directory, is that appropriate? Is that an appropriate weight listing for the airport?

DD: It mirrors what's in the Master Plan. It's 70,000 pounds dual-wheel configuration. That's what it was determined to be based on that data which was used in the Master Plan.

KS: Now this study will verify that or (inaudible) weight-bearing statistics. But again, our objective for this study was how long has that runway got and what should we be planning on in the way of maintenance, repair. You know you can't see what's happening underneath the overlay and that's what these core samples are going find out so you can tell whether you've got full-depth kinds of rehab ahead of you, and then you start doing your planning, your fund raising, and all the things associated with that condition.

SC: The information that I got at some point along from dealing with the Administration and others is, my feeling that I got is that the weight, the listed weight-bearing capacity in the Facilities Directory is not appropriate to the usage (inaudible) excessive waivers being issued and (inaudible) the weight-bearing capacity needs to be increased so that's the reason why the questions have been involving that (inaudible). Another point that I had is, you mentioned an FAA mandate. Can you elaborate on that? What would happen if the testing came back and showed that the weight-bearing capacity is greater? Could the FAA mandate some type of an increase and what's the process for that? Can you explain that?

KS: We'll take your questions down. I'll believe it when I see it because I don't know how the federal government can mandate something that couldn't be operated or maintained. And as I explained no new pavements have been approved out here in ten years, the taxiway in the back at Lease Area 50 for the purpose of the t-hangars. OK, so what we're doing is trying to rehabilitate and maintain the current standards what exists here for the benefit of the users of the airport. That's it.

SC: I heard two different sources of how this recalculation could be triggered, either by the City or by the FAA. Are there any other mechanisms or agencies or any other outside sources that could trigger this recalculation other than the City or the FAA? One final question that I would have is I know Rob and other members have asked to get a waived traffic report or log to see exactly what's being waived on a month-to-month or a year to see what type of fleet mix exists outside of the realm of the existing capacity. That's all I have.

RR: Any other questions? OK thanks much Kevin and if we could get follow-up reports (inaudible).

KS: What I would do in this instance is get back to you in draft minutes by e-mail all these questions and make sure we've got them all down and then give you some kind of timeline by which the FAA or Law or whatever study we decide needs to be consulted so we can get you the answers and when you're satisfied there's enough of a body of information to have a discussion, schedule a discussion.

RR: I like that.

KS: First of all I'd like to see that we've got all the questions that everybody has registered today and get them completely and accurately and then do some estimation on who and how long so we can get them answered.